(6) All superannuated officers enjoying extensions of service should be immediately retired and in the last vacancies caused thereby fresh graduates appointed. Several poor families would be benefited by the adoption of this policy.

(7) Much hardship was being experienced by the merchants on account of the manner in which income tax was recovered from them. Instances were not wanting where those who had assessable incomes escaped assessment while others who had no such incomes were assessed. Representations in this respect were often in vain. Further, it was hard to recover income tax from *coir* merchants, *copra* merchants, etc., in times of economic distress. This tax should be suspended in their case without detriment to their franchise to the Legislative Council and other public institutions.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Martandan Vaidyan, your suggestions, like those of the previous speaker, cover a very wide field ; and I can only say that they will be carefully considered in the attempts that we are making both to remove the economic depression and also to reduce expenditure.

32. The present economic condition of the ryots of Nanjinad and measures to be adopted for improving the same.

MR. S. AZHAKIANAYAKAM PILLAI (*Agastisvaram taluk*) said that agriculture was the mainstay of the people of Travancore and that therefore the prosperity and advancement of the State depended upon the development of agriculture and the prosperity of the agriculturists. No doubt the Government, with the object of developing agriculture and increasing the welfare of the people, have organised an Agricultural Department and a Public Works Department, afforded facilities for the grant of agricultural loans and opened a Land Mortage Bank. But the officers did not pay much attention to know and redress the real grievances of the agriculturists. Whenever the superior officers went on tour they camped in chief centres and never cared to visit interior villages and ascertain the real condition of the agriculturists. The member therefore suggested that in every taluk all the officers of the Tahsildar's status and above should be asked to visit every village, ascertain the condition of agriculture and the economic position of the agriculturists and submit periodical reports which might be either monthly or half yearly.

The rates of assessment on the lands in Nanjinad were high. This coupled with the fall in the price and yield drove the ryots to borrow money even for paying the *kist*. The tax should therefore be reduced taking into consideration the price of paddy, the yield of the lands and the probable returns to the cultivator.

The measures in use in Nanjinad were not uniform. The grain measure should be standardised and measures should be made and stamped by the Government and sold to the public. Those who used other measures should be prosecuted. The same subject had been represented at the previous session of the Assembly also.

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Of all the Departments in the State, the Co-operative Department was the most useful to the agriculturists. This department should be developed more and more and given added responsibilities. Most of the functions attended to by the Agricultural Department such as the sale of seeds and manure might with advantage be transferred to the Co-operative Department. These duties would then be attended to for the greater benefit of the ryots.

Agricultural loans should also be issued through the Co-operative Department. According to the existing practice the poor ryots were not much benefited by these loans.

The Land Mortgage Bank also should be placed under the control of the Co-operative Department. They would result in greater benefit to the poor ryots from that institution. Till this proposal was carried out, a branch of the Bank should be opened at Nagercoil.

During the past 4 or 5 years, the annual maintenance of and repairs to the irrigation *kals* and channels in Nanjinad were not properly attended to with the result that the level of the *kals* and channels was being raised. Instructions should be issued to the Public Works Department to attend to these works promptly every year. The main reason for the breaches that occurred in the Tovala channel last year was the indifference on the part of the officers of the Public Works Department in attending to its maintenance. Distribution of the channel water also was not attended to properly. The distribution should be made by the officers of the Public Works Department in consultation with the chief ryots and the Revenue officers of the locality.

Lastly, portions of the reserved forests in South Travancore should be assigned to the agriculturists according to their requirements for the purpose of planting manure trees.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Azhakianayakam Pillai, I will try to reply to some of the points raised by you but not in the same order.

The Tahsildars, at present, are touring about and making reports on the results of their tours.

Reduction of land tax and the introduction of a uniform standard of measurement must wait till the next settlement.

The co-operative societies at present do some work; and if they come forward, the Agricultural Department will be very glad to help them in their activities and do more work for the benefit of the agriculturists by way of distribution of seeds, etc.

In regard to agricultural loans, it has been decided that they must be distributed through the Land Revenue Department, as it has greater facilities for doing so than any other department.

The Land Mortgage Bank is working as an executive measure now. With the gaining of experience, and the development of business, the question of placing it on a statutory basis will be considered. Before the question of opening branches of the Bank in Nagercoil and other places is taken up, we must see how it works here.

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